Six Mile Fire Department's station

BY GREG OLIVER
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SIX MILE — Officials from Six Mile and Pickens County Council gathered Tuesday at the new Six Mile Fire Department on Mt. Olivet Road, saying the facility wouldn't have come about without cooperation between the two governing bodies.

Former Six Mile Mayor John Wade recalled receiving a letter from Pickens County Administrator Chap Hurst, informing him of plans to build a new fire station and a desire for the town to join in the effort.

Although Wade admitted the proposal "caused a little fuss" among the townspeople, he added that after three to four months of discussion with residents and volunteer firefighters, "We decided it was really a no brainer."

The department became part of the Pickens County Rural Fire District last year and formally vacated its longtime headquarters adjacent to town hall last summer. New chief Michael Barrett said the nearly $500,000 facility is larger, with more room for firefighter training than its previous location.

"The (fire truck) bays are larger, as the former facility's doors only had about an inch on each side when backing the trucks in," Barrett said.

Barrett added the new facility is also set up to accommodate living quarters once the time eventually comes to employ full-time firefighters. The chief added the location is also advantageous because it is in "the dead center" of the rural fire district.

"We cover Six Mile and the rural part of Six Mile, which is about 49 square miles, all the way to the Oconee County line on S.C. 183 and also go all the way to Pickens and Liberty," he said. "We feel it's going to help us better serve the community and its citizens."

Pickens County Administrator Chap Hurst said the new fire station's location would also include more homes as part of the fire district than was previously the case.

"This could make a $500 to $600 difference a year reduction for people who did not have fire coverage," Hurst said. "Previously, those who were not covered saw an insurance increase."



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Pickens County Rural Fire Chief Michael Barrett, whose district includes the Six Mile Fire Department, discusses the various features of the new fire station with, from left, Six Mile Mayor Roy Stoddard, Pickens County Administrator Chap Hurst, Pickens County Council member Trey Whitehurst and Six Mile Fire Board Chairman Scott McCall. A formal dedication and open house of the new station was held Tuesday.

dedicated Tuesday

Wade said keeping the fire station in the town of Six Mile would have been cost prohibitive and added the facility, as well as the hiring of a full-time fire chief, have been positives.

"(The station is) only a mile-and-a-half down the road, so it's been a good thing for everyone," Wade said,

Current Six Mile Mayor Roy Stoddard said the fire station has been and will continue to be an integral part of the town.

"The firemen have helped with the Issaqueena Festival, put up brackets on telephone poles and other things that, without them, many of the things we wanted to do wouldn't have been accomplished," Stoddard said. "This has been a seamless transition, and we look forward to a long and lasting relationship between the county, the town of Six Mile and the fire department."

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